

Message Text

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51

ACTION SPM-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 ISO-00 SP-03 IO-14 HEW-08 AID-20

SAJ-01 EB-11 COME-00 NIC-01 SAM-01 SWF-02 AGR-20

SCI-06 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-20 USIA-15 OIC-04 AF-10

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1992

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 9469

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SPOP, CH, PFOR, UN

SUBJECT: CHINESE COMMENTS ON BIRTH CONTROL AT THE WORLD POPULATION
CONFERENCE

SUMMARY. BEHIND THE PUBLIC STANCE WHICH IT ADOPTS ON
POPULATION PROBLEMS PEKING IS CONCERNED AND ACTIVELY PUSHING
BIRTH CONTROL AT HOME. AT THE CURRENT WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE
CHINA HAS MODIFIED ITS POSITION SLIGHTLY AND HAS PUBLICLY OWNED
UP TO A POPULATION OF "ALMOST 800 MILLION," A 100 MILLION JUMP
FROM PREVIOUSLY STATED STATISTICS. AS EXPECTED, PEKING IS
ATTEMPTING TO STEER THE WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE INTO A
SEMINAR ON SUPERPOWER HEGEMONY. END SUMMARY.

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1. DOMESTIC IMPLICATIONS

AT A SPEECH GIVEN TO THE UN WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE IN BUCHAREST ON AUGUST 21 HUANG SHU-TSE, VICE MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND LEADER OF THE CHINESE DELEGATION, STATED PUBLICLY FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT CHINA'S POPULATION WAS "NEARLY 800 MILLION." THE FULL QUOTATION IS: " IN THE TWENTY-ODD YEARS SINCE THE FOUNDING OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC, CHINA'S POPULATION HAS INCREASED NEARLY 60 PERCENT, FROM ABOUT 500 MILLION TO NEARLY 800 MILLION."

2. THE STATEMENT IS INTERNALLY CONTRADICTORY. CHINA'S 1949 POPULATION WAS 548.7 MILLION ACCORDING TO THE 1964 "PEOPLE'S HANDBOOK" PUBLISHED BY PEKING TA KUNG PAO. A 60 PERCENT INCREASE EQUALS 878 MILLION. HOWEVER, THE "NEARLY 800 MILLION" FIGURE APPARENTLY IS THE NEW GOSPEL, FOR NCNA USED IT AGAIN ON AUGUST 22. IT AT LEAST HAS THE VIRTUE OF BEING SOMEWHAT MORE DEFENSIBLE THAN THE "MORE THAN 700 MILLION" FIGURE USED BY THE PRC'S OBSERVER AT THE MARCH PREPARATORY SESSION FOR THIS CONFERENCE. HUANG CITED PREVIOUSLY-USED AGRICULTURAL FIGURES THAT GRAIN OUTPUT MORE THAN DOUBLED SINCE 1949 TO INDICATE THAT CHINA HAS NO REAL POPULATION PROBLEM.

3. TURNING TO CHINA'S POPULATION POLICY, HUANG GENERALLY REPEATED THE LINES GIVEN AT PREVIOUS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES. HOWEVER, A CHANGE IN PHRASING CONVEYED THE IDEA OF ADDED EMPHASIS ON CONTROL. AT THE APRIL 1973 ECAFE CONFERENCE, THE PRC OBSERVER STATED THAT CHINA'S POPULATION POLICY WAS "INCREASING IN A PLANNED WAY" AS THE ECONOMY DEVELOPED (1973 HONG KONG 3887). AT THE MARCH 1974 PREPARATORY CONFERENCE, CHINA'S OBSERVER STATED ONLY THAT CHINA WAS "PURSUING STEP-BY-STEP A POLICY OF PLANNED GROWTH OF POPULATION." THIS TIME, BY CONTRAST, HUANG USED THE PHRASE "PLANNED REGULATION OF THE RATE OF POPULATION GROWTH." ALTHOUGH HE ALSO CLAIMED THAT LATE MARRIAGE AND BIRTH CONTROL ARE "ENCOURAGED ON THE BASIS OF VOLUNTARINESS," INNUMERABLE REPORTS AND TRAVELERS REPORT STRONG NEGATIVE SANCTIONS BEING IMPOSED. FOR EXAMPLE, SANCTIONS INCLUDE THE DENIAL OF REGISTRATION AND RATION CARDS AND THE MILK RATION FOR A THIRD OR FOURTH CHILD, DENIAL OF MATERNITY LEAVE BENEFITS AND STRONG INSISTENCE ON STERILIZATION OF ONE SPOUSE AT THAT POINT.

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4. HUANG FURTHER ADMITTED THAT THE BIRTH RATE IN DENSELY POPULATED AREAS HAS "DECREASED IN VARYING DEGREES"--PHRASING THAT CLEARLY IMPLIES THAT MANY CITIES ARE NOT DOING NEARLY SO WELL AS PEKING AND SHANGHAI WHERE THE RATE IS CLAIMED TO BE BELOW TWO PERCENT. SIGNIFICANTLY, HUANG MADE NO CLAIMS OF SUCCESSES IN THE RURAL AREAS WHERE OVER 80 PERCENT OF CHINA'S POPULATION LIVES.

5. INTERNATIONAL

SIMILAR TO HER PERFORMANCE AT THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE, CHINA IS ATTEMPTING TO PROJECT AN IMAGE AS A STRONG SPOKESMAN FOR THIRD WORLD INTERESTS STRIKING OUT AGAINST SUPERPOWER DOMINATION. HUANG REMARKED THAT IT WAS NOT POPULATION GROWTH, BUT BRUTAL AGGRESSION, PLUNDER AND EXPLOITATION BY THE IMPERIALISTS, PARTICULARLY THE SUPERPOWERS, WHICH HAS SHACKLED THE PEOPLE OF ASIA, AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA. AFFIRMING THAT A LARGE POPULATION IS A GOOD THING, HE COMMENTED: " THE LARGE POPULATION OF THE THIRD WORLD CONSTITUTES AN IMPORTANT CONDITION FOR STRENGTHENING THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND HEGEMONISM AND ACCELERATING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT."

6. HUANG CHARGED THAT THE SUPERPOWERS, "SINGING A DUET," DESCRIBE THE THIRD WORLD'S POPULATION GROWTH AS A GREAT EVIL BECAUSE THEY ARE AFRAID THE REAL CAUSE OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY WILL BE DISCOVERED. WAXING ELOQUENT ON THE ANTI-MALTHUSIAN, MARXIST VIEW OF POPULATION EXPANSION, HUANG STATED: "THE CREATIVE POWER OF THE PEOPLE IS BOUNDLESS, AND SO IS MAN'S ABILITY TO EXPLOIT AND UTILIZE NATURAL RESOURCES. THE PESSIMISTIC VIEWS SPREAD BY THE SUPERPOWERS ARE UTTERLY GROUNDLESS AND ARE BEING PROPAGATED WITH ULTERIOR MOTIVES." HUANG FURTHER ADDED, REPEATING A STANDARD PEKING LINE, THAT POPULATION POLICY IS AN INTERNAL MATTER FOR EACH COUNTRY TO DECIDE AND THAT ANY INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION MUST BE BASED ON COMPLETE VOLUNTARINESS.
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